of cost and also arrange for provision of water, electricity and approach road. The project cost for setting up an AIIMS like Institution is estimated at Rs. 280 crores (approx.), which is proposed to be met by the Central Government.

The PMSSY Scheme has been cleared by the Expenditure Finance Committee and Committee of Secretaries (COS) and is being processed for placing before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) for approval. The proposed Institution is expected to become operational after three years from the date of approval of the CCEA.

The Government of Madhya Pradesh has provided the requisite land for setting up of AIIMS Bhopal. The construction of boundary wall around the site at Bhopal has almost been completed.

Indebtedness of farmers in Punjab

*194. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Punjab is one of the richest States and has most of its farmers (65.4 per cent) in the debt;

(b) whether farmers in the State are not just using the crop loans for farm related purposes but on a number of other things and ultimately find themselves in a quagmire when they are unable to pay the loans back; and

(c) if so, whether Government have made any investigation to find out the reasons that led to increase in their indebtedness?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) As per the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) Report No. 498 on "Indebtedness of Farmer Households" released in May, 2005, 65.4 per cent of farmer households in Punjab were indebted.

(b) The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) Report No. 498 referred to in Part (a) indicates the following purpose-wise pattern of distribution of outstanding loan (including crop loan) taken by farmer households in Punjab:-

* 26.4 per cent for capital expenditure in farm business;
* 36.0 per cent for current expenditure in farm business;
* 4.4 per cent for non-farm business;

* 8.5 per cent for consumption expenditure;
* 10.2 per cent for marriages and ceremonies;
* 2.5 per cent for medical treatment; and
* 12.0 per cent for other expenses.

(c) The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) Report No. 498 referred to in Part (a) does not indicate the reasons for increase in farmers' indebtedness. However, the survey treats the farmer households having a liability in cash or kind with value of Rs. 300 or more as indebted farmer households.

Foreign expertise in removing pollutants from water

*195. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some foreign countries have offered their expertise in removing pollutants from water bodies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether U.K. has also expressed its willingness to extend help in cleaning of the Ganga and other major rivers in the country; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 1. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has provided technical assistance for the Development Study relating to "Water Quality Management Plan for Ganga" with focus along stretches of four towns namely, Kanpur, Lucknow, Allahabad and Varanasi. The JICA Study Team/ Consultants selected by JICA for carrying out the study started their work from March, 2003 and completed it in August/September, 2005. The study basically envisaged formulation of the Master Plans and Feasibility Studies for the sewerage (including sewage treatment) and non-sewerage components for the four towns. These Master Plans and Feasibility Studies have been prepared by the JICA Study Team in close collaboration and consultation with UP Government and its concerned agencies in the four towns as well as taking into account the work already done and presently being done in these towns under NRCP.